

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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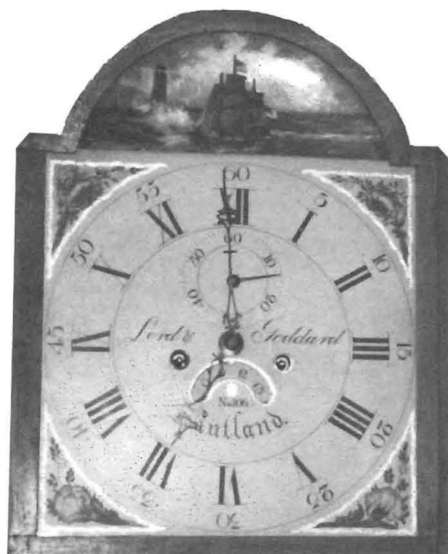
1996

Rutland's Early Clockmakers Lord and Goddard



DON BORDEAU

*An example of the finely detailed artwork enhancing a
typical Nichols Goddard clock face.*



DON BORDEAU

Lord and Goddard clock with rocking ship.

Introduction

In the summer of 1996 Mrs. George Harer of Long Island, New York, generously gave the Rutland Historical Society an authentic Nichols Goddard tall clock made in Rutland in the early Nineteenth Century. This gift inspired author Dawn D. Hance to gather together research material she had compiled on clockmaker Goddard and his partner Benjamin Lord for a Quarterly detailing the lives of these two men who worked and resided in Rutland and were outstanding in their craft.

Dawn Hance has previously written a number of Quarterlies for the Rutland Historical Society and is the author of several town histories. She has also authored the Society's *Early Families of Rutland* and *The History of Rutland, Vermont, 1761-1861*. She is a professional genealogist and a registered nurse.

Acknowledgements

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Lilian Baker Carlisle, author of *Vermont Clock and Watchmakers, Silversmiths, and Jewelers*.

Sources

Lilian Baker Carlisle, *Vermont Clock and Watchmakers, Silversmiths, and Jewelers*

L. W. Flanders and Edith F. Dunbar, *Simeon Ide. A Genealogy of the Ide Family*
East Parish Congregational Church Records

Rutland Town Land Records

Rutland Herald

Rutland's Early Clockmakers: Lord and Goddard

by Dawn D. Hance

This past June a tall clock was put on display at the Rutland Historical Society 199 years to the month after its maker first advertised as a Rutland silversmith and clockmaker. The clock, dating from the early Nineteenth Century, was manufactured by Nichols Goddard, who announced the opening of a partnership in Rutland in June 1797. In 1996 Mrs. George Harer presented the rare time-piece to the Society because she felt that it should return to its place of origin.

For a time Goddard was in partnership with Benjamin Lord in Rutland. A Lord and Goddard clock has also been bequeathed to the Society. Above the face of that clock is a tiny ship, which with each tick appears to bounce over waves, with a lighthouse in the distance. These clocks, nearly two centuries old, still keep near-perfect time.

Lord and Goddard were not the only Rutland clockmakers of that time. In 1796 Thomas Wilmot, a silversmith and clockmaker, came to Rutland and went into partnership with William Storer, a silversmith who had been in Rutland since 1788. In 1797, Benjamin Lord, a silversmith, went into partnership with Nichols Goddard in the clockmaking business. Both of these firms located in Rutland's East Parish. In 1797, Benjamin Bridge advertised his clockmaking and watch repair business in the West Parish of Rutland near the meeting house. Storer and Wilmot advertised the availability of alarm clocks, plain clocks, thirty-hour clocks and clocks with the rising moon. These were manufactured in a building located on West Street. Storer had purchased this land and building in 1796 for 300 pounds, a sizeable sum for the times. In March of 1801 Storer and Wilmot officially dissolved their partnership. Soon after 1800 both Bridge and Wilmot had left the area.

Benjamin Lord was born in 1770 in Norwich, Connecticut, the son of Ebenezer and Temperance (Edgerton) Lord. Nothing is known of his early years or where he gained his skills for making fine silverware. In early 1796 he advertised in the *Western Star* that he was plying his trade at a shop in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, opposite the meetinghouse on the road to Lanesborough.

By April of 1797 Lord had arrived in Rutland, Vermont. He purchased a small cobbler's shop a few rods north of the West Street intersection on the west side of Main Street, north of Mr. Brewster's bake house and opposite Pomeroy and Hooker's drug store. By June he had formed a partnership to manufacture clocks and articles of gold and silver with Nichols Goddard who had just recently arrived in Rutland.

Nichols Goddard was born in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, 4 October 1773. He was the son of Nathan and Martha (Nichols) Goddard. He had been apprenticed to his cousin Luther Goddard of Shrewsbury to learn the clockmaking business. Luther Goddard most probably had been trained by the noted clockmaker Simon Willard. Nichols Goddard completed his apprenticeship in 1794 and in 1795 he worked at his trade in Northampton, Massachusetts. He had relocated to Rutland by June 1797 when he and Benjamin Lord, silversmith, formed a partnership.

It is not known whether Lord and Goddard were acquainted before their arrival in Rutland or what brought them to this town; possibly it was the promising business climate. On 19 June 1797 the firm of Lord and Goddard advertised their musical clocks which played seven tunes, shifting to a different one each day and rendering a psalm on Sunday. These clocks also displayed the day of the month as well as the hour, minutes and seconds. Alarm, moon, plain, eight-day and thirty-hour clocks were also available. The advertised silver and gold ware included gold beads, rings, silver spoons, buckles, buttons and sugar tongs.

From 1797 to 1805 the partnership of Lord and Goddard produced an unknown number of clocks and from 1805 to 1823 Goddard alone made a minimum of 37. After the partnership dissolved in 1805 Goddard continued to number his clocks consecutively beginning somewhere between #113 and # 124. The clocks, one of the most expensive of household furnishings, were valued at \$70 to \$80.

With their careers well-established, both young men felt secure enough to marry and start families within the next two years. Goddard returned to Northampton, Massachusetts, to marry Charity White on 16 September 1798. Most likely they had become acquainted while he was working in Northampton. Lord



Charity (White) Goddard

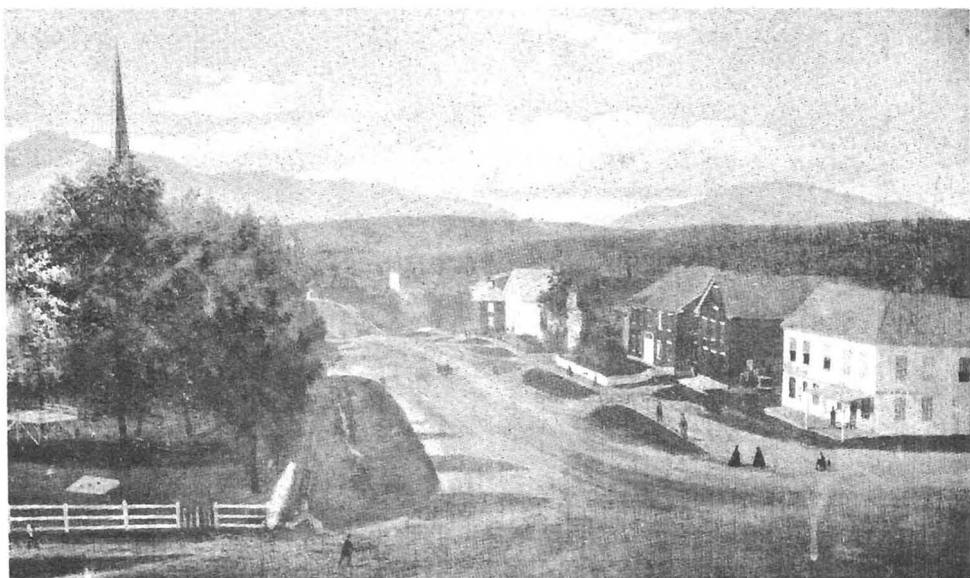
married Fanny Buel, the daughter of Benjamin and Elizabeth Buel on 28 January 1799 at Coventry, Connecticut. Lord may have actually met his future bride in Rutland, as there were other early Buels in Rutland who hailed from Coventry.

No doubt the young men quickly outgrew their close quarters in Lord's shop on North Main Street. In March 1800 they moved to a building on the north side of West Street that was formerly occupied by Storer and Wilmot. On 22 April 1800 William Storer sold the building to Lord and Goddard for \$1,000. This building had been built circa 1787. Nathan Perry kept a tavern there and later occupants were John Prentiss and noted jurist Nathaniel Chipman. (This building was located a little west of the present site of Brooks Pharmacy). To the west was the mansion house of Dr. Heman Ball which later became the American House. To the east stood the Corner House, a popular tavern.

At the new West Street location, Lord and Goddard continued to make and repair clocks and watches and do every kind of silver and goldsmithing work. In June 1800 they advertised for two smart active lads about 13 or 14 years old to learn the watch and clockmaking business.

For some unknown reason, Lord and Goddard decided to dissolve their partnership on 26 April 1805 and go their separate ways. Goddard continued on at their old West Street shop where he manufactured musical and common eight-day clocks. Lord moved one door east to the Corner House where he sold eight-day clocks, English and Geneva watches, spoons and earrings.

On 12 July 1806, Goddard advertised that he was selling English, French and Swiss watches, warranted eight-day clocks, with or without cases, clock faces, glasses, pinions, balls, watch chains, seals, keys, crystals, breast pins, brooches, gold beads, finger rings, gold and plated ear knobs, silver tea, table and salt spoons, sugar tongs, thimbles and sleeve buttons.



FRED BALDWIN

Lord's Corner (r. circa 1860) at the intersection of West and North Main Streets. In this vicinity Lord and Goddard conducted their clockmaking business.

Lord maintained a share in Goddard's West Street shop until April 1808 when he sold it to Goddard for \$475. On 3 March 1808 Lord had purchased the Corner House for \$800 from Jesse Gove. For many years this property at the northwest corner of Main and West Streets was known as Lord's Corner. Both families lived in the buildings occupied by their respective shops.

Both men advertised their merchandise in November 1808. Goddard was selling chime and common eight-day clocks with or without cases, watches, gold rings, earrings and hoops, gold beads, pins, silver spoons and sugar tongs. Lord announced that he had received a shipment of English and French watches and watch furniture and was manufacturing eight-day clocks.

Both Lord and Goddard were community-spirited men. Lord must have been blessed with a fine singing voice for in 1798 the East Parish Congregational Church named him and three other men as choristers for church services. None of the four were members. The choristers must have sung a capella because the church had no organ.

Often referred to as Capt. Lord, Benjamin was active in the militia. However, in March 1805 it was announced that Capt. Lord's Company of Artillery in the Third Regiment had been disbanded because there were not enough privates.

In February 1806 Lord was named secretary of the newly formed Vermont Academy of Rutland. He was also active in the Masons. He served as Town Clerk from 1809 to 1815 and again in 1826. From 1824 to 1831 he was overseer of the West Street Cemetery.

The *Rutland Herald* in October 1826 commented on his gardening skills. He had raised a 15-pound beet. His garden stood north of his house and he also owned Lord's Meadow, a nine-acre plot between West and Center Streets.

Lord's home at the corner must have been a busy place. Although his first child died shortly after birth, sons Ebenezer D. and Benjamin Buel and daughters Frances, Elizabeth and Lydia came along to fill the house. In addition to his own children, his nephew Benjamin Lord, son of his brother William of Berlin, New York, lived with him for several years. He died at Ferrisburg, Vermont, on his way home from service with the army in the War of 1812, most likely from the prevailing epidemic. He was buried in Rutland in December 1812, aged 22. Lord's mother-in-law, Elizabeth Buel, was also a member of his household. She died 6 March 1818 at the age of 82. Lord's longtime friend, Nichols Goddard passed away 29 September 1823. On 24 June 1824 Lord's life was further saddened by the death of his 49-year-old wife Fanny.

About 1830 Lord's two sons Ebenezer and Benjamin B., who undoubtedly had served their silver and goldsmithing apprenticeship under their father, moved to Athens, Georgia. Daughter Elizabeth married a gentleman from Baltimore, Maryland, 20 July 1830, and the once full home began to show signs of emptiness.

It must have been with much soul-searching that Lord made the decision to settle with his sons in Georgia. At the age of 61, a resident of Rutland for 34 of those years, he concluded that he should move South. In November 1831 he sold Lord's Corner for \$1,500 and gave up his pew in the Congregational Church where he had been a member since 1826.

Lord can be pictured packing up his belongings, bidding farewell to dear friends and making one last melancholy visit to the graves of his wife and his friend Nichols Goddard at the West Street Cemetery.

After arriving in Athens, Georgia, Lord continued to work at his trade. One of his sons died in 1838 and the other in 1840. Benjamin remained in Athens until his death 23 April 1843. He was buried that evening with Masonic honors. On 20 May 1843 his watchmaking and silversmith tools were auctioned off at his shop.

Lord was well-liked by people and considered an upright and honest man. He was obviously a skilled silver and goldsmith.

Although Lord and Goddard dissolved their partnership in 1805, it is believed that the two men remained on friendly terms throughout their lives. The families seem to have been close. On 7 July 1822 both Mrs. Goddard and Mrs. Lord joined the East Parish Congregational Church. Their children were baptized soon after. After Nichols Goddard's death in 1823, Lord was appointed administrator of his estate. Goddard's daughter Evelina Ide named her daughter Frances Lord after Lord's daughter. Unfortunately Frances Lord Ide lived only a brief time. Shortly after the child's death, the Ides attended the wedding of Evelina's friend "Miss Lord" (most probably Elizabeth) in Rutland and accompanied the couple on their honeymoon to New York.

On 10 October 1814 Goddard sold the premises, where he lived and worked, to Dr. James Porter for \$1,300. About 1831, when Dr. Porter erected a new brick residence on the site, he moved the old Goddard building to his property on Woodstock Avenue.

In April 1815 Goddard bought land and several buildings on the south side of West Street from Frederick Fuller for \$800. The property was bounded on the east by the building that contained the Masonic Lodge and a store and on the west by Fitch's chair factory. The buildings on the property included a 1798 gunshop and a barn on the east portion. There was also a house that had been originally built as a store on the green in 1790. Later that year it was moved to the south side of West Street (currently 26 West Street) to accommodate the new public common.



DAWN HANCE

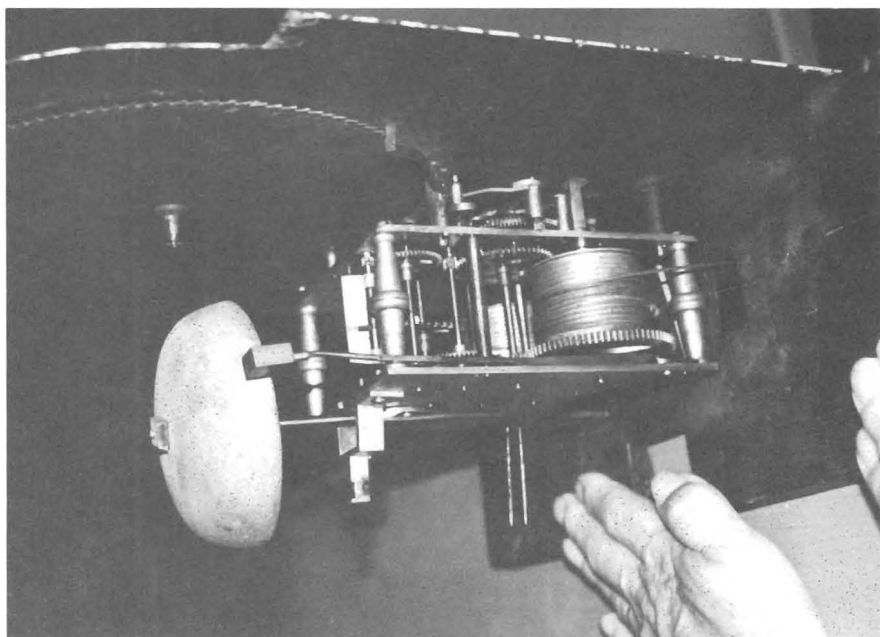
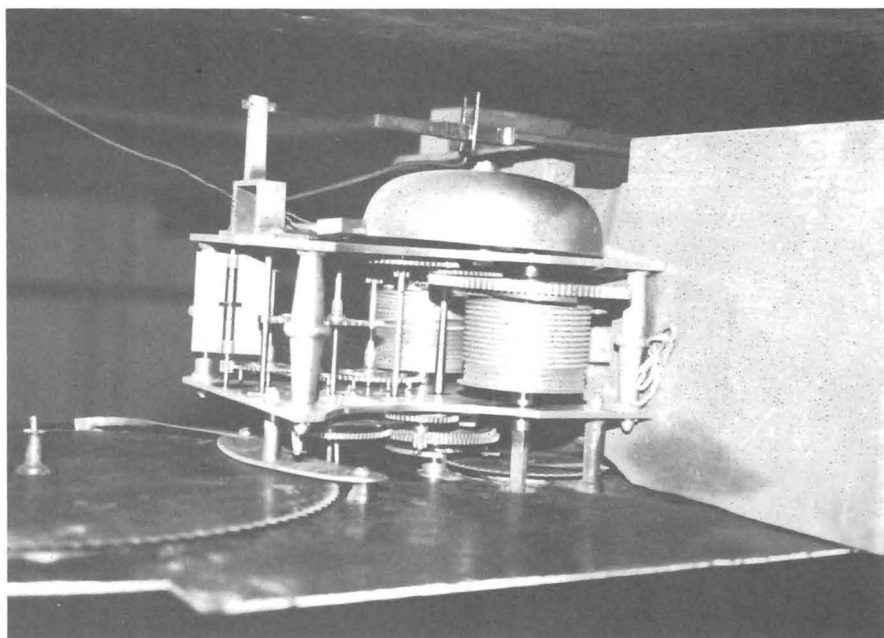
At 26 West Street, Nichols Goddard plied his trade (1815-1823).



The chiming clock of the Rutland Historical Society. A recent gift of Mrs. George Harer, it bears the name of Nichols Goddard and the number 150.



A detailed view of the elegant cabinet work of the clock shown opposite.



(l) Clockworks of Nichols Goddard's tall clock, number 150, belonging to the Rutland Historical Society. (r) Almost identical works from an unauthenticated second clock, lead to the conjecture that it too was produced by Goddard.

There is evidence that Goddard's health began to fail by 1814 or 1815. His future son-in-law Simeon Ide, a journeyman printer at the *Rutland Herald* from 1814 to 1815, often passed pleasant evenings at the fireside of the Goddard home while courting his future wife, Evelina. He notes in his memoirs that Mr. Goddard obviously was in failing health. According to his memoirs, Ide at this time promised that he would never let this family group suffer from the want of earthly comforts.

The years 1815 to 1818 were marked by a depression and general stagnation of business. Several factors contributed to these poor economic times—the aftermath of the War of 1812-1814, the epidemic of 1813 and the very cold temperatures throughout the year of 1816 which caused massive crop failure. Cash was a scarce commodity. The sagging economy may have been the deciding factor in Goddard's decision to sell his property.

On 13 January 1818 Goddard sold his property at a loss to local merchants George T. Hodges and Dr. Thomas Hooker for \$500. It is probable that Goddard leased the premises until his death in 1823. The 1820 Census places him at this location.

Goddard was active in community affairs. He was the Town Clerk in 1803 and was Town Treasurer from 1805 to 1807. He was a Captain in the militia. In 1802 he was elected Grand Junior Deacon of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Vermont and from 1804 to 1810 served as Grand Senior Warden.

Not a lot is known of Nichols Goddard, the man. But his belongings give some evidence of his character. His wardrobe was limited and simple in quality and quantity. He was well-read, if his library is any evidence. It comprised nearly thirty volumes which included history, geography, literature, religious works, Masonic publications, and Baron Von Steuben's work on military discipline.

During Goddard's last illness he was ministered to by Drs. James Porter and John Cleveland. Goddard died on 23 September 1823 just five days short of his fiftieth birthday. He was interred in the West Street Cemetery. His estate was charged three dollars for his coffin, two dollars for digging the grave and twenty dollars for his gravestone.

After the death of Nichols Goddard, his son-in-law Simeon Ide took the widow and Evelina's younger brothers and sisters, Harriet Martha, Nichols White, Edward Lewis, Nathan Chapin and Charlotte Mary, to live with him in Windsor, Vermont. The family later moved to Claremont, New Hampshire, where Nichols Goddard's widow died 10 November 1857, outliving her daughter Evelina by nearly six months. [Although the first-born, Evelina often remarked that she was the last of everything, having come into the world in the last hour of the last day of the last month of the last year of the century.]

Now, almost two hundred years after Lord and Goddard created their exquisite tall clocks, many of them still keep perfect time in private homes and museums. They stand as a tribute to the fine craftsmanship of two talented artisans and the unknown cabinetmakers.



The Rutland Herald

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1890.

THE OLD GODDARD CLOCKS.

Rutland Visited by a Gentleman of
Mighty, Who Tells About His Father
and Some of the Scenes of Long Ago.

Mr. Nichols W. Goddard of Malden, Mass., is in town, revisiting the scenes of his boyhood. He is 80 years old, but as lively as a boy of 50, and says if the Lord is willing he means to keep so 10 or 20 years longer. He is the oldest son of Nichols Goddard, of the firm of Lord & Goddard clock and watchmakers, whose place of business was on the corner of Main and West streets. He was born in 1806 and his father died in 1828. Captain Lord, his father's partner, was for many years town clerk. Mr. Goddard distinctly remembers Rutland 75 years ago, and says that in his boyhood he picked strawberries all over the site now occupied by the principal business portion of the town. He remembers the large square whipping post which stood in the corner of the park at the junction of West and Main streets, and recalls the scowl upon the face of Preston Graham, the sheriff, when he whipped a culprit there.

THE GODDARD CLOCKS.

2 Mr. Goddard has written the following account of his father's business:

"In the year 1797 Nichols Goddard commenced business as the clock-maker in the firm of Lord & Goddard. They were first and foremost in their line of business in the state. Mr. Goddard was often called upon for the repair of clocks in the neighborhood and towns around, while Mr. Lord gave special attention to the watch and jewelry department. They usually employed in their work five or six men and boys, some of whom showed marked inventive ability.

Mr. Goddard received his training at Shrewsbury, Mass., his birth place, where at the age of 21 he was employed by Luther Goddard in making brass clocks, etc. He afterwards worked at the same business at different times and places, as may be seen in the following specimen of extracts from his diary of 1795:

At Shrewsbury—"Finished one eight-day clock movement." "Finished three clock movements." "Finished casting five clock move-

ments." at Northampton, for Ingals—"Finished one eight-day clock."

The first watch manufactured in this country for the trade was made. It is claimed, in 1781 by the above named Luther Goddard, who procured foreign workmen to make the finer portions.

Of the brass musical clocks and plain eight-day clocks made at Rutland, many are now running and they are in much repute. The writer hereof has now (1885) at his home one with which he has been familiar for more than forty years. It has kept almost perfect time without undergoing repairs to speak of, and it bids fair to mark off time by seconds, minutes, hours, months and moons, for a half or a full century to come. One of the musical clocks is owned by a grandson, Mr. George H. Goddard of New York, and may be seen at his residence in running order. On the dial of the clock is shown, at the center in the form of an arch, the day of the month; seconds are indicated above, and overtopping all the smiling moon tells her quarter, or age, from the new to the full, and the whole outer circumference is subdivided by the long central indicators into seconds, minutes and hours. We also see the hands of the tunes to be played each day of the week by little hammers on a sweet-toned chime of bells. They play a psalm-tune on Sundays.

In the manufacture of these clocks, as machinery in those early days was into common use, we may mention a very fine hand-engine or milling machine used by Mr. Goddard for cutting the gears and pinions; a plate-mill consisting of a pair of rollers with a crank at one end of each, for the rolling out of small bars of silver or gold to the desired thickness; and the neat blow-pipe for jewelry work, besides the usual forge and bellows.

Captain Goddard and Captain Benjamin Lord during their business life in Rutland were ranked among the men of mark in that place. Both held offices of trust and could point to a respectable if not distinguished ancestry. Their intelligence and probity secured for them more than the common respect and regard, and they contributed largely to the moral, educational, industrial and civil progress of a town which then contained 1,400 inhabitants, but has now reached a population of 16,000. It was a place of rendezvous for soldiers as early as the war of 1812, when the law of imprisonment of poor debtors and the whipping-post for crimes and misdemeanors were in vogue.

The Lord and Goddard Clocks

The author has located eight numbered Lord and Goddard clocks. Their numbers are: 72, 75, 87, 95, 97, 106, 111, 113.

Nichols Goddard clocks which have been identified are numbers: 124, 144 and 150. Three other Nichols Goddard clocks have been found but their identifying number is either missing or illegible.

Two more clocks exist which are most probably the work of these local clockmakers but can not be positively attributed to them.

Some of these clocks may be seen in museums or other public places but many occupy private homes. In Vermont a Nichols Goddard musical clock may be seen at the Bennington Museum. Nichols Goddard clock #150 is in the possession of the Rutland Historical Society and may be viewed at the Society.

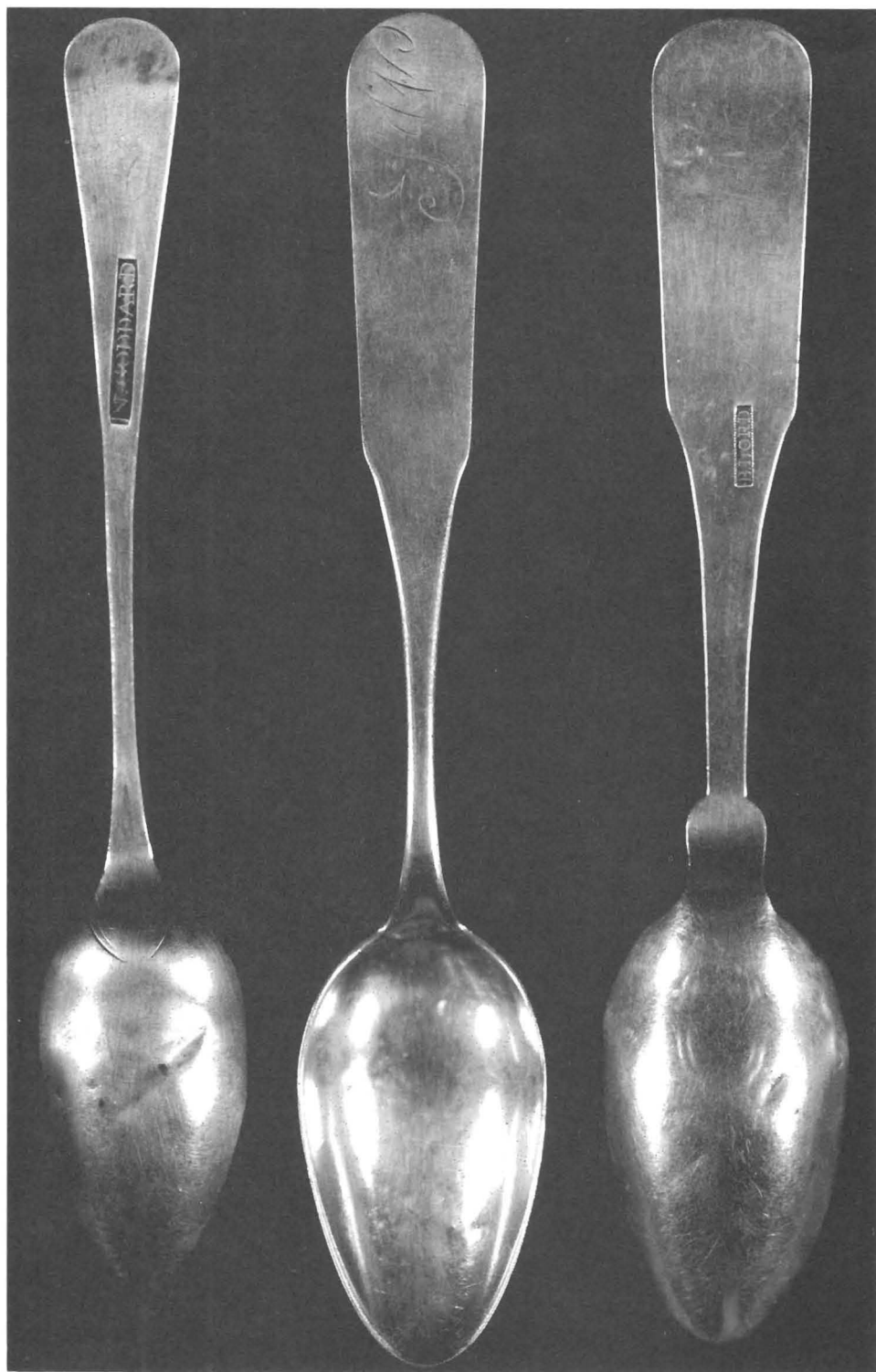
It was customary for the cabinets to be made by cabinetmakers rather than the clockmaker. The makers of the cases of the clocks seldom identified their work. It is likely that some, if not most, of the cases were made locally. Most of them were over seven feet tall and would have been cumbersome to transport any great distance. It would have been very expensive for a clockmaker to keep an inventory of these large cases.

The following were Rutland cabinetmakers of the period:

William Alvord
William Hale
George Buck
Ebenezer Knight
John B. Clough
E. Winslow
Ephraim W. Bisbee
Diodorus Sheldon

The search for Lord and Goddard (1797-1805) and Goddard (1805-1823) clocks continues. If anyone knows the whereabouts of additional clocks, the Rutland Historical Society would appreciate the information - especially the identifying number of the clock.

Both Nichols Goddard and his son-in-law, Simeon Ide, kept diaries or journals. The Society would be most interested in any information about these.



Two silver teaspoons (r) made by Lord; the other by Goddard.

The Contents of the Shop of Nichols Goddard (From the Inventory of His Estate)

show case	pair of scales with wood shoes
hand saw	one hack saw
old bridle	steel drill bow
case of drawers with its contents above	plating mill valued at \$15
lower drawer	35 pounds old steel files - No 13
79 watch glasses	31 3/4 pounds punches tools etc.
good file with handle	- No. 6
old seal box and 2 seals	2 old shears
3 main springs	43 pounds old large punches - No. 3
set of figure punches	2 small vices [sic]
six small figure punches	2 papers of [?] - No. 35
2 eye glasses	20 pounds hard metal - No. 9
14 pair of plated trouts [sic]	19 pounds lead
10 water hooks	1 small lathe and iron wheel
2 pair of dash handles	box of tools - No. 23
1/2 dozen window springs	61 pounds old iron
1 gross and 6 tough nails	box of patterns
4 dozen and nine buckles	1 pair bellows
one gross of shots	1 vice [sic] 26 1/2 pounds
26 quire roses	1 vice [sic] 23 pounds
20 saddle heads	95 pounds cast iron
7 sets buckles and tips for bridles	29 3/4 pounds old brass
10 dozen tough nails	76 pounds old iron
16 pieces of molding for saddle heads	11 1/2 pounds old iron
5 fronts for bridles	41 pound anvil
sundry small pieces of plated work	small grind stone and crank
old clock had of Wilmot's	6 brass sets for ornaments
one swage [sharpening tool] for	1 pound copper
buckles	1 bit stock
one swage oval to strike plate for	1 pair compasses and 2 mandrels
hoops	[spindles]
2 small hammers and sliding pliers	8 hammers
[sic] and pin vice [sic]	bench vice [sic]
old saddle	small table
clock engine valued at \$10	chest
two wooden clocks valued at \$5	2 old cases drawers for shop
6 clock bells in No. 2	2 small iron kettles
6 old chime bells in No. 2	pair of loop tie instruments.
old stuff in box - No. 4	

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Membership in the Society is open to all upon payment of appropriate dues. (See dues schedule below.) Membership provides a subscription to the Quarterly, "News from Nickwackett", entitlement to vote at business meetings, and benefits accruing from support of the Society's exhibits, programs, collections and library. The year through which membership is paid and the category of membership are noted on all address labels.

Please send any address change on Postal Service Form 3576 (a postcard freely available at your local post office).

Annual Meeting is held at 7:30 p.m. on the third Thursday of October.

Annual dues categories are:	Sponsoring—\$50.00	Students—\$8.00
	Contributing—\$20.00	(18 & under)
	Regular—\$10.00	Senior Citizens—\$8.00
		(62 & up)

Special one-payment categories are: Lifetime—\$200.00 Memorial Gift—\$200.00

Advance payment for 2 or 3 years is welcome, helping to reduce costs.

Please make checks payable to: Rutland Historical Society
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Manuscripts are invited: address correspondence to the Managing Editor.

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